

Senator McCONNELL did not support the McCain-Feingold bill in the end. But he was passionate about there being a fair process.

As another Kentucky son once said, Justice Louis Brandeis, "We are not won by arguments that we can analyze, but by tone and temper—by the manner, which is the man himself."

To me, that is MITCH McCONNELL—a conservative to the marrow but someone who has never forgotten why we come here:

To make a difference.

So I congratulate my colleague and his family for reaching this remarkable milestone. May you continue to expand on it for many years to come. Thank you.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). Morning business is closed.

#### DESIGNATING CERTAIN LAND COMPONENTS OF THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRESERVATION SYSTEM—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume the motion to proceed to S. 22, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 22) to designate certain land as components of the National Wilderness Preservation System, to authorize certain programs and activities in the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes. I have conferred with the Senator from Oklahoma, Mr. COBURN, who was scheduled to speak first. That is satisfactory with him. I further ask unanimous consent that Senator COBURN be recognized at the conclusion of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Pennsylvania is recognized.

#### REPORT ON FOREIGN TRAVEL

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have sought recognition to speak briefly about foreign travel which I undertook over the past recess, focusing principally on the Mideast and on Europe.

My group arrived in Jerusalem on December 26, late in the evening on Friday. The next day, the hostilities arose in Gaza. I had an occasion to discuss this matter with a number of officials in Israel and also with Prime Minister Fayyad of the Palestinian Authority.

As is well known from the news reports, the Israeli action was taken in response to shelling by Hamas on Israel over a protracted period of time. Israel's action was legal under international law, Article 51 of the United

Nations charter which expressly recognizes the right of self-defense under circumstances where a nation is attacked. And that was the factual matter there. In speaking to Israeli President Peres and Israeli Prime Minister Olmert, the point was made that Israel was taking this action only as a last resort to protect Israeli citizens.

It is highly significant that the Palestinian Authority, which has had its differences with Hamas, has backed the Israeli position. We had a discussion with Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Fayyad, who said that the Palestinian Authority was convinced that Israel had acted properly and that the Palestinian Authority would do what it could to maintain quiet within the Palestinian Authority's jurisdiction in the face of any demonstrations which might occur.

It is worth noting that Egypt has backed the Israeli action, noting the aggressive stand taken by Hamas, and Saudi Arabia, too, has noted Hamas's inappropriate conduct.

We visited in Vienna with Ambassador Schulte and discussed at some length the International Atomic Energy Agency efforts to conduct inspections on what is going on in Iran with respect to any efforts by Iran to create a nuclear weapon.

A year ago, I had an opportunity to meet with IAEA Director Mohamed ElBaradei. He was out of town when we were there. I had a conversation with him by telephone on the issue of the efforts by the IAEA to conduct the inspections and that at the moment Iran is not cooperating and, further, international action needs to be taken to be sure Iran does meet its obligations under international agreements and that there are adequate safeguards to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

When we were in Syria, Iran's activities on that subject were discussed with Syrian President Bashar al-Asad. On the Iranian subject, President Asad urged that action be taken to try to get the inspections, and that would be a more productive line than challenging whatever rights Iran had asserted.

In our discussions with President Asad, the subject of a potential Israel-Syria peace treaty was discussed. The Syrians have made it plain that they are interested in a return of the Golan Heights. Only Israel can decide for itself whether it is willing to give up the Golan with respect to whatever strategic advantage the Golan may have. Obviously, it is a different world strategically today than it was in 1967 when Israel captured the Golan Heights.

It is my view that there could be substantial advantages for Israel in terms of Syrian concessions in a number of directions to leave Lebanon as a sovereign nation without efforts to destabilize Lebanon but withdrawing any Syrian support from Hezbollah and also from Hamas. When we discussed with

President Asad the issue of Hezbollah and Hamas, he said if the Palestinian issue could be resolved, those other matters would fall into place.

There is also the potential advantage of trying to move Syria away from the influence of Iran. That is not an easy matter. But if there were to be an Israeli-Syrian peace treaty—and I think that can happen only with the participation of the United States—the prospect would be present of improving that situation of trying to separate Syria from Iran.

In Brussels, we had a meeting with General Craddock, who is the NATO commander there. We discussed a variety of subjects, as described in a more extensive report that I will ask to have printed in the RECORD.

With respect to our discussions with General Craddock, the key point was the issue of what is going on in Afghanistan. General Craddock made the point that there cannot be a military victory in Afghanistan but the military can be successful in securing the situation, that there will have to be improvements in the Afghanistan Government in dealing with the people of Afghanistan. General Craddock commented that he thought it would be a protracted period of time where we would have to have substantial NATO forces, in addition to those provided by the United States, to find a resolution of the issues in Afghanistan.

I was accompanied on my trip by my legislative director, Chris Bradish, my military escort, Phil Skuta, and by Dr. Ronald Smith, all of whom did an excellent job. A very comprehensive trip report has been prepared by Mr. Bradish. I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, as if stated in full on the floor, the trip report.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### REPORT ON FOREIGN TRAVEL

Mr. President, as is my custom, when I return from foreign travel, I file a report with the Senate.

From December 25, 2008 to January 5, 2009, I traveled to the United Kingdom, Israel, Syria, Austria, Belgium, Norway, and Iceland. I was accompanied by my wife, Joan, my Legislative Director, Chris Bradish, my military escort, Phil Skuta, Colonel, USMC, and Dr. Ronald Smith, Captain, USN.

#### ISRAEL

I departed the United States on December 25th and made a brief stop in London en route to Israel. We arrived in Israel on the evening of December 26th. This was my twenty-sixth visit to Israel since joining the Senate in 1981. Almost exactly a year after my previous visit to Israel, the domestic political landscape had changed significantly. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert tendered his resignation on September 21, 2008, and general elections are set for February 10, 2009. One of the major questions being posed to the major parties is how best to approach the peace process.

A 6-month truce between Israel and Hamas ended on December 19, 2008. United Nations data showed that fewer rockets were fired at Israeli towns in the initial few months following the onset of the truce on June 19, 2008. The New York Times reported on December 19 that, "more than 300 rockets were